

Testimony in support of
Raised SB 88
AN ACT CONCERNING AID IN DYING FOR TERMINALLY ILL PATIENTS
Submitted to Public Health Committee, CT Legislature, February 2022

My name is Tessa Marquis. I am a resident of Milford, CT.

I am submitting today's testimony **in SUPPORT of SB 88, An Act Concerning Aid In Dying For Terminally Ill Patients.**

I would like to begin by thanking the Co-Chairs of this Committee: Senator Abrams and Representative Steinberg, the Vice-Chairs: Senator Anwar, Senator Kushner, and Representative Gilchrest, for your leadership on the many issues in front of you during these difficult times.

In addition, I would like to express my great appreciation to Senator Haskell and Senator Winfield **for co- Sponsoring this Bill**, along with Representative Berger-Girvalo, Representative Doucette, Representative Elliott, Representative Farrar, Representative Gilchrest, Representative Hennessy, Representative Hughes, Representative Kavros DeGraw, and Representative Michel.

I have had the Honor, the Duty, and the Determination to testify and advocate for this, and similar Acts, since 2014. This year is different. I am writing to you this year because my mother died five weeks ago. This makes testifying this year a much harder, much more raw, experience for me. Other years I have been able to be measured and see other people's pain. Now I am just alternating between deep sorrow and righteous anger.

Yes, Anger. *I am very angry with the Connecticut Legislature.*

I am angry with many governmental bodies, but I live in Connecticut and I am – more than ever – angry at the legislators and other entities that slow-walk solutions to issues that involve unnecessary suffering of residents of our State.

This particular Bill is not about the inequality, inequity, unfairness, and cruelty involved in our State's existing laws and structures. I care deeply about all of those issues. Today, however, is about the suffering inflicted on the many by the cruel, stubborn, uncaring, and vicious inaction of the few.

Spoiler Alert: We all will die. We will die from many causes: Cancer being the one that scares everyone the most. There are Heart attacks, vehicle accidents, house fires, mass shootings, and miscellaneous diseases that gang up on the body to end the life. There is drowning, suicide, murder, miscarriage, medical malpractice, unaddressed maternal death rates, brain hemorrhages, and more. All of these sorrowful events are to be mourned.

But....The law's callous disregard for the suffering that comes before someone can "pass away" or "take their last breath" or "meet their maker" or, like Elvis, simply "leave the building" is just a sham and a disgrace.

I have tried to be fair and welcoming to those individuals on the "Against" side of this issue. I have been empathetic and understanding to those who have fear and distrust. I do not, however, have any patience or sympathy for self-serving organizations or entities that extend the suffering of other people. I am talking about emotional profiteers. They have other agendas which have nothing to do with human beings.

In conclusion:

I believe that *everyone* must have *equal access* to the full range of life choice options.

(You may need to read that sentence twice.)

Don't use your position to corner law-abiding citizens into becoming "murderers" or force a suicide or make them leave their homes to find end of life solace elsewhere. **We owe this small thing to our terminally ill friends, families, and neighbors.**

Residents of Connecticut must be permitted to make end-of-life care decisions based on their own belief systems, culture, and personal choice determinations.

We all must be allowed to pass from this existence without stress, pain, anger, or any other harm.

You must ensure that SB 88 moves forward this year.

Thank you for listening to/reading/considering my straight-from-the-heart testimony.

I realize it is long, but it is also long over-due.